

1981 Alberta Social Studies Curriculum

..... *IN-SERVICE PROJECT:*

Skills Objectives Module

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OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this workshop on the skills component of the 1981 Social Studies Curriculum. During the workshop, you will have the opportunity to examine the two categories of skills outlined in the new guide. The two kinds of skills, inquiry and participation, provide a format that students can use in exploring complex issues. You will also have the opportunity to use this model guide. Finally, you will be able to examine the guide to identify those skills that are prescribed for a specific grade level topic.

The activities in each section of the workshop have been designed for individual and group participation with minimum direction (or interference) by the presenter. It is suggested, therefore, that each group select one person to act as an informal group leader and "clock watcher", so that the activities can be completed within the allotted time limits.

Suggested Times

Section One	- Why These Skills?	10 minutes
Section Two	- A Process for Social Inquiry	15 minutes
Section Three	- Mini-Simulation	40 minutes
Section Four	- Classroom Realities	10 minutes
Section Five	- Social Action	15 minutes

SECTION ONE

WHY THESE SKILLS?

The statement you are about to read introduces the skills included in the 1981 Alberta Social Studies Curriculum and outlines the importance of this component. After reading the article, you will be asked to discuss three brief statements. This section should take about ten minutes to complete.

Why These Skills?

"Nothing is certain but death and taxes." Well, that may have been true in Benjamin Franklin's day, but to remain true in Canada today, it would have to read, "Nothing is certain but death, taxes, and change."

We, in our society, have a great deal of personal freedom and an ever-widening range of choices in which to exercise that freedom. At various points in our lives, we must make choices - career choices, entertainment choices, political choices, moral choices. We make choices in our food, clothing, mode of transportation, and general lifestyle. We choose with whom and where to live, which people to call friend, and, in some cases, who we will consider our family. Furthermore, as Gail Sheehy, author of the popular book Passages, points out, the choices we make at one stage of our lives, while perfectly adequate at that time, don't necessarily remain valid for the later stages or times.

There is every reason to suppose that this trend will continue and that

even greater personal freedom will result. As Canadians, we have as much or more personal freedom than any other people in the world. But the price is heavy in terms of the added stress that continual change and the burden of making choices brings to our lives.

How do we learn to live with freedom and the wide range of choice that this freedom brings? Canadians must be skilled at assessing choices; we must be good at analyzing the alternatives and foreseeing the possible results of each choice. We have to be confident of our ability to make decisions. We must be able to develop not only a personal plan of action for any given situation, but also group plans of action when necessary. This ability to work co-operatively to solve common problems is a key skill for citizens of our society.

The skills we need in order to cope with our dynamic, freedom-oriented, and ever-changing society are stressed in the Social Studies Curriculum. Students also face a world marked by change and choice. To prepare them for their role in this kind of world, the 1981 Curriculum calls for the teaching of eight areas of inquiry skills and four areas of participation skills.

The inquiry skills are those which help in making decisions at any level. They include research skills, the skills in making or applying decisions, and evaluation skills. Together, all eight skills form an inquiry process or model which can apply to instruction plans at any grade level or to individual issues and choices. The model can, of course, be modified to suit specific situations such as changes of topic, content, resources, or student maturity.

In addition to the inquiry skills, four participation skill areas are suggested. We do not live and work in isolation and the skills required to work co-operatively are important ones for students to master. These include communication skills, being able to interpret ideas and feelings, the skills of participating in groupwork and decision-making, and finally, the ability to contribute to a sense of community. The participation skills have a more immediate application to the situations students meet outside of school and are, therefore, important to develop at an early age and to continue to develop through to adult life. If students are encouraged to work together during class time while investigating an issue, they can develop both the participation skills and the inquiry skills that are appropriate at their level of maturity.

The goal for us, as teachers, is to help students learn to explore issues effectively. As the issues that face our society become more and more complex, we will need people who can analyze, explore and resolve these issues effectively.

These are the greatest intellectual skills that a teacher can foster in a student.

1. Read the section in the curriculum guide under the headings "Inquiry Skills" and "Participation Skills", pages 8 and 9. Indicate how the skills component of the curriculum contributes to the attainment of the objectives of the curriculum?
2. Select a grade level topic. What skills for that topic are to be emphasized? Which are to be given less emphasis?

3. Does the Process for Social Inquiry enable all skills that you consider to be important to be taught?

SECTION TWO

A PROCESS FOR SOCIAL INQUIRY

In this section, you will be examining the inquiry model to determine how various student activities fit into the model. Section Two should take about 20 minutes.

First, look at the Skills section of the curriculum . Working as a group, examine the student activities listed on the chart. Decide which of the eight inquiry skills each activity is an example of and tell why. Some activities may actually illustrate more than one inquiry skill, but choose the best one. Be prepared to defend your choice.

STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY

INQUIRY SKILL AREA

Example: The students write summaries of a number of different points of view.	Synthesize Data - The students are re-organizing data into a new form.
a. The students view a videotape to gather information.	
b. The students identify the causes and effects of a number of events they are examining.	
c. After assessing its value, the students plan to help a local community group to carry out a project.	
d. The students examine a statement for a racial bias.	
e. The students brainstorm to come up with several likely approaches to a problem presented to them.	
f. After listening to a debate, the students compare and contrast position to decide which side they support.	
g. The students categorize a number of positions as being either for or against a particular question.	
h. The students place data they have gathered on a chart.	
i. The students re-state an issue in their own words.	
j. The students draw a number of conclusions after they have studied a graph.	
k. The students examine a decision they have made to see if they still feel it was the most appropriate choice.	
l. The students identify three potential solutions to a problem and predict the likely consequences of each solution.	
m. The students play a simulation game to discover how a number of inter-related events effect one another.	

SECTION THREE

TO SELL OR NOT TO SELL

An Inquiry Exercise

This section will give you an opportunity to use the inquiry process in a very simple problem situation. This is a mini-simulation involving change and choice. In this simulation, each of you will assume the roles of Town Councillors of Nouville. Your task, as a group, will be to attempt to resolve an issue, hopefully, within 40 minutes.

Who are You?

Member of Nouville Town Council

Where are you?

Town Council Chambers

Why are you here?

To resolve an issue in regards to the sale of Lake Shore property.

How do we proceed?

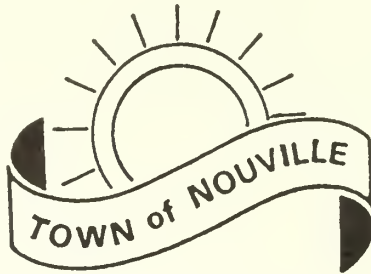
- (1) Quickly select a council chairman.
- (2) Read over consultant's report on Council Decision-Making Process. (The Council requested a consulting firm to design for them, a more efficient way of reaching decisions. Too many long wasteful sessions!)
- (3) Read over agenda, letter from S.T. Merchant, letter from Joe Goodheart, memo from Art Clerke, and review map of area in question.
- (4) Use the process for decision-making as outlined by the consultant. (His eight-step process bears a striking resemblance to the inquiry model on pages 8 and 9 of the 1981 Curriculum Guide.)

The problem raised in the simulation is quite clearcut and requires little additional factual information. Because of this, the steps in the inquiry process can be followed rather quickly. Of course, in a complex issue, just one step might take several hours of work. If clarification of any steps is required, refer to pages 8 and 9.

Following the simulation, read the section on "Participation Skills" on page 9 of the curriculum guide. Try to identify the participation skills and inquiry skills your group used in working through the simulation.

At the completion of this exercise, you should have a fairly clear idea of how the inquiry and participation skills interact to provide a process that students can use in exploring complex issues.

- (5) What skills of the inquiry process did you use?
- (6) Is the inquiry model a "lock-step" procedure?



AGENDA

1. Call to order.
2. Minutes of Last Meeting
(adopted as previously circulated)
3. Old Business: Consultant's Report--Summary (The report was given to council previously. This is simply the one-page summary requested by council members at the last meeting.)
4. New Business: Offer to purchase Lake Shore property
 - a) Letter from National Widgits, Inc., clarifying their offer to purchase.
 - b) Letter from Nouville Recreation Association opposing the purchase.
 - c) Memo from Art Clerke, Town Treasurer.

AB&C

CONSULTING LTD.

COUNCIL DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

(A Summary of the Report by AB and C Consulting Ltd.)

1. What is the issue to be resolved?
2. State the issue in a concise question and decide how to proceed to answer it.
3. Gather and organize data dealing with the question.
4. Analyze and evaluate the assembled data.
5. Synthesize the data.
6. Resolve the issue by answering the question.
7. Carry out the decision if it is feasible and practical.
(For purposes of the simulation, "councillors" should discuss kinds of problems they would have implementing the hypothetical decision.)
8. Evaluate the decision, how it was arrived at, and the resulting action (if any). (For purposes of the simulation indicate some method that the council could use to evaluate its decision.)

**NATIONAL
WIDGITS INC.**

552 Crowther Avenue, Toronto, Alberta

April 22, 1981

Nouville Town Council
1032 - 48 Street
Nouville, Alberta

Gentlemen:

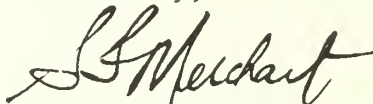
I am replying to your letter of April 5th, requesting some clarification of our recent offer to purchase land bordering on Paradise Lake.

The offer of \$4,000,000.00 is for the ten-acre parcel that was specified in the original offer. We could not possibly accept a different ten acre plot since the widgit factory we intend to construct requires a stable and constant water source as part of the cooling mechanism. This would be amply provided for by the lake.

Of course, the proximity of the town and feasibility of expansion to provide housing for the expected 200 workers for the plant are also very desirable features. Our policy is to hire personnel locally, whenever possible, but I anticipate the need to import at least part of the necessary labour force for the plant.

I sincerely hope that this clarifies our position. I look forward to hearing from you soon regarding our offer.

Yours truly,



S. T. Merchant
Executive Vice-President

**NOUVILLE
RECREATION
ASSOCIATION**

April 15, 1981

Dear Mr. Mayor

We have just recently heard that a large manufacturing company wants to buy Paradise Beach and put up a factory on it. We don't need to tell you what a terrible thing that would be for our town.

Paradise Beach is an important recreation area for this town. You will remember the survey we conducted last year. We found that:

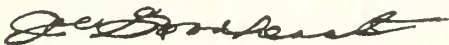
- 83 per cent of the townspeople had gone swimming there at some time during the last year
- 34 per cent go fishing regularly
- 26 per cent of the families have one or more boats
- 93 per cent participated in the annual town Sports Day there in June
- 75 per cent have gone for picnics or other non-water activity at the beach in the last year.

These forms of recreation are important to many people in Nouville, and Paradise Beach is the only part of the lake that will support these activities. As you know, the water level in the lake changes from year to year, leaving most of the lakeshore swampy and unusable. We have only one area of stable lake shore and that is Paradise Beach. The natural sand washes up on this part of the shore and two years ago, the association brought in extra loads of sand to help build up the beach area.

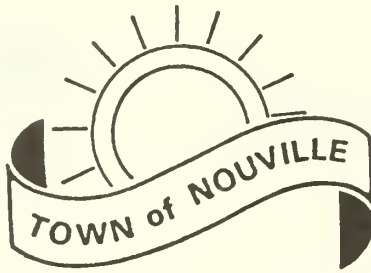
Another concern that we have is the company's need to be next to the lake. What will they be doing to the water? Will they be using it as a dumping ground for polluting chemicals, or will they be using our small lake to cool the machinery and in that way change the basic temperature of the lake, killing the fish?

In either case, we would be very much opposed to the misuse of our lake in this way. We hope that you and the town Council will turn down this proposal and ensure that Paradise Beach will be preserved for the use of the townspeople.

Sincerely yours



Joe Goodheart, President
NOUVILLE RECREATION ASSOCIATION



MEMORANDUM

TO: PHINEAS T. MUDDLEMAN, MAYOR
FROM: ART CLERKE, TOWN TREASURER
DATE: April 23, 1981
RE: PROJECTED REVENUE FROM SALE OF PARADISE BEACH

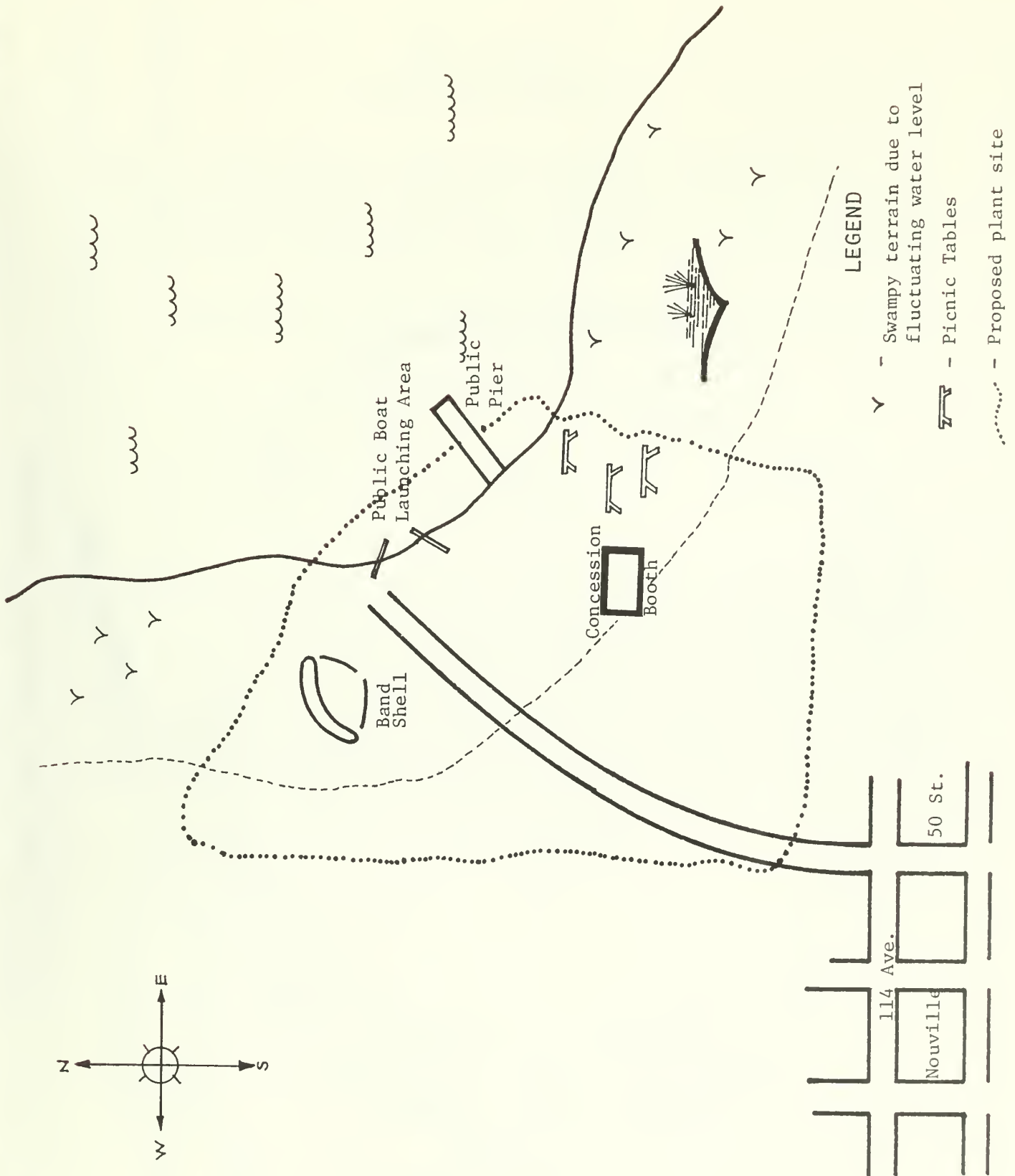
An examination of the plans submitted by National Widgits shows the following possible revenue figures:

1. Purchase price \$4,000,000.00
2. 200 Additional Jobs \$200,000.00 per year
Annual town revenue estimated at \$1,000.00 per local job held (miscellaneous taxes, fees, offences, etc.)
3. Direct taxation of the Company \$400,000.00 per year

It would appear that the annual revenue could be in excess of \$600,000.00. This would be more than adequate to meet the costs of the much needed upgrading of roads and sewer systems. In addition, the purchase price itself could provide the council with an opportunity for necessary capital expenditures as discussed at previous council meetings.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Art Clerke".

Art Clerke
Town Treasurer



SECTION FOUR

CLASSROOM REALITIES

In Section Four, we return to the reality of the classroom. Choose a topic at a particular grade level and examine the skill objectives that are listed in the curriculum guide. Using the circle chart provided in this manual, write in the spaces provided, the particular inquiry skills provided for the topic. Have all steps in the process been provided for?

Now, examine the participation skills listed for your topic. Discuss where on the circle these particular skills may be best developed.

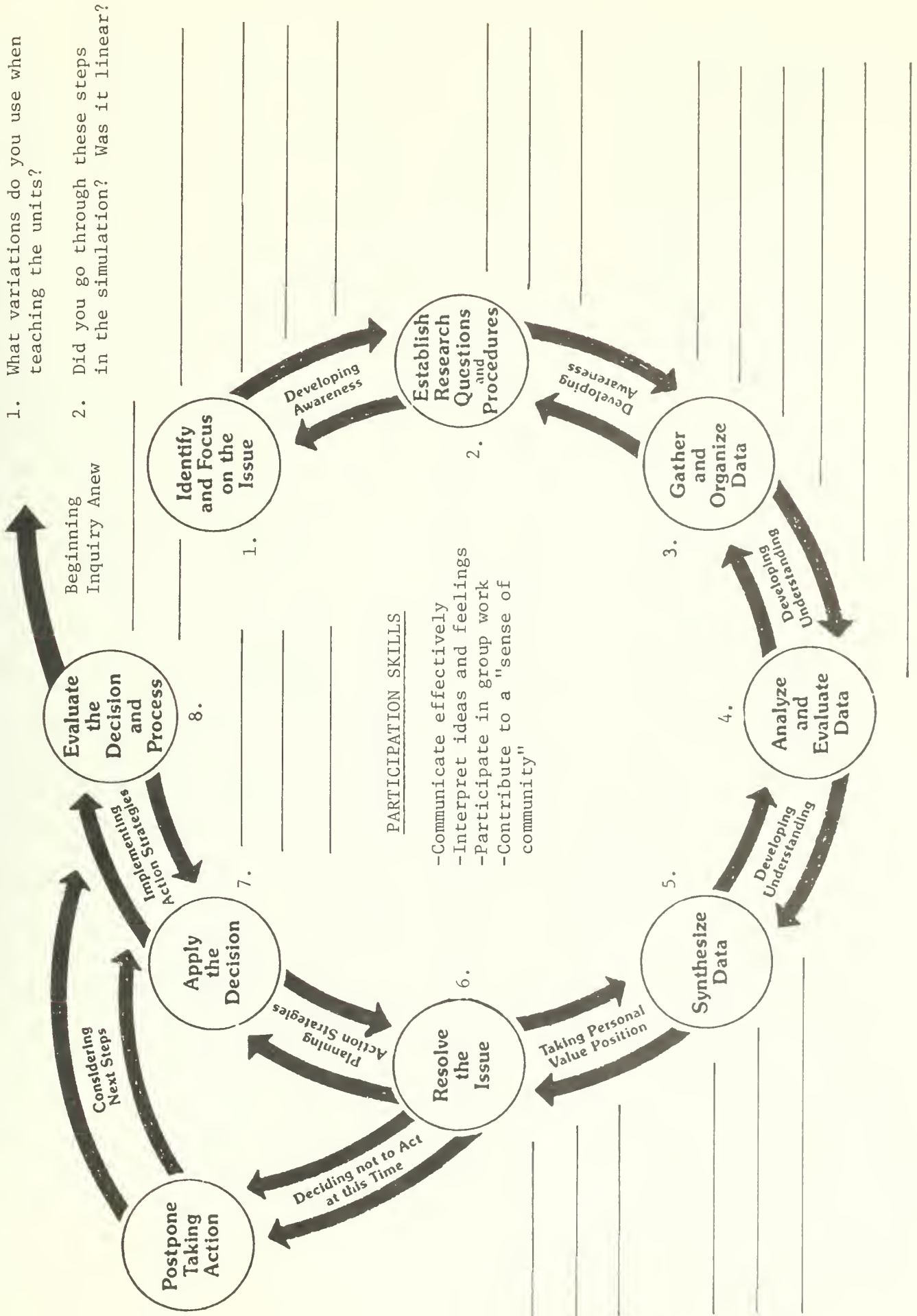
SECTION FIVE

SOCIAL ACTION

One of the critical skills to be developed is that of applying a decision. This is also known as social action. Teachers should provide for the development of this skill as much as they do for each of the other skills. However, there are many considerations that must be thought out before proceeding with various forms of social action. Examine the accompanying chart that outlines a few examples of social action. Discuss in your group the appropriateness of these activities in relation to the grade you were using for the first part of this activity. If time allows, list some criteria that would make some of these activities appropriate -- e.g., legal questions, feasibility, community attitudes, etc.

FIGURE I

A Process for Social Inquiry



SOCIAL ACTION Grade _____ Topic _____	Under what conditions, if any, would this action be appropriate for the selected grade level?	Under what conditions, if any, would this action <u>not</u> be appropriate for the grade level?
Example - The student decided to join political party.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if the student was old enough - if the party's ideology and platform did not conflict with the student's values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if the political party advocates the violent overthrow of the government and the genocide of specific ethnic groups.
1. The student decides to try to reduce the amount of energy he or she uses in daily living.		
2. A group of students decide to picket a landlord who is charging what they feel to be overly-high rents.		
3. A group of students decide to use their social studies periods to help out at a Senior Citizens' home.		
4. A group of students decide to publish a weekly newsletter indicating which of three local grocery stores have the best prices.		
5. A group of students enter a walk-a-thon to raise money for third world countries.		

Examples of how a unit can be organized using the skills contained in the curriculum's inquiry model have been included. The first example is from the Grade 2 Teaching Unit. The second example is from the Grade 10 Kanata Kit.

GRADE 2 - TOPIC C

FLOW CHART OF UNIT STRUCTURE

A. OPENER - FOCUS ON THE ISSUE

What basic needs do all people have?
What services and facilities could be planned into a community to meet these needs?
Should some services be provided in all communities?

B. ESTABLISH RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND PROCEDURES

1. The class formulates research questions to apply to selected world communities to determine what services and facilities are available and how they are planned for in the community.
2. Ways to get answers to research questions are suggested by students.

C. GATHER AND ORGANIZE DATA

1. Read the prepared story, map, and any other resources identified for each community case study to answer the research questions.
2. Record answers for research questions on a retrieval chart.

D. ANALYZE AND EVALUATE DATA

Why is the community planned this way? What does this tell you about what is important to the people?

E. SYNTHESIZE DATA

Compare answers on the retrieval chart for the different communities to bring out the concepts and generalizations, e.g., how many of the communities have houses? Are the houses the same?

F. RESOLVE THE ISSUE

1. Discuss suitability of facilities and services found in the local community to other communities with different environments and cultures.
2. Individually complete a checklist on facilities and services that should be provided in all communities.

G. APPLY THE DECISION

1. If desirable and feasible, plan and carry out a needed service in the local community.
2. As a class, react to new subdivision plans.

H. EVALUATE THE PROCESS

1. How did we study this unit?
2. Which parts of the unit were interesting and informative?

UNIT STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION:
FLOW CHART

Unit Format	Process of Inquiry	Activities	Questions Guiding Inquiry
PART I OPENER	Awareness Focus on major value issue Identifying the issue Developing research questions	1. Conflicting Values 2. Dilemma: The Right to Write 3. Defining the Issue: Freedom/Control Values Inventory (Pre-test)	To what extent should the Canadian government protect individual rights, and to what extent should it guarantee social order? What is the nature of the conflict between freedom and control? What questions must be answered before I can come to a conclusion on the main issue? What are my initial feelings about the issue?
PART II RESEARCH	Research Assemble evidence Evaluate evidence	1. Questions of Freedom and Rights 2. Questions of Order and Control 3. Historical Case Study: Prohibition 4. Historical Case Study: Japanese Internment 5. Historical Case Study: The FLQ Crisis 6. Individual Rights in Canada	What is meant by the term <i>freedom</i> ? Which freedoms are important? Why? What is meant by the term <i>social control</i> ? What forms does it take? What are the merits of control? What has been the balance between freedom and control in Canada? How have these values come into conflict in Canada's history? To what extent have the rights of the individual taken precedence over the maintenance of social order? What rights currently exist in Canada? To what extent are they protected?
PART III CONCLUSION	Resolving Issue Refocus on issue Decision Applying decision Action	1. Resolving the Issue: Position Paper Assignment 2. Questions of Action	What should be the proper balance between freedom and control in Canada? Which rights should be guaranteed? How should these rights be protected? Under what circumstances (if ever) should the government have the authority to take away these rights? What forms of action are available to the individual to promote or bring about his or her view of the proper balance of freedom and control? What should I do? What factors will influence my decision?
PART IV FINAL EVALUATION	Evaluate process	1. Freedom/Control Values Inventory (Post-test)	To what extent have my views on this issue changed? What experiences in the unit contributed to this change or lack of change? How certain am I of my conclusions? What are the limiting factors? How do my conclusions and reactions compare to those of others?

APPENDIX 7

Learning and Earning Citizenship Through Participation by Dan Conrad and Diane Hedin

By *youth participation*, we mean the direct involvement of adolescents in the life of the community, ideally in activities concerned with ameliorating or solving social issues and problems. The goal is not just *talk* about public issues, but to *do* something about them.

Some criteria by which we may be able to assess the relevance of participatory programs for citizenship education:

1. Performing tasks that both the students and the community think are worthwhile.
2. Having others depend on one's actions.
3. Working on tasks that challenge and strengthen one's thinking — cognitively and ethically.
4. Having some responsibility to make decisions within their projects or placements.
5. Systematically reflecting on the experience.

Youth Participation as a Method of Citizenship Education:

Our belief that youth participation should be a major component of citizenship education grows out of these four observations:

1. Adolescents are citizens now, not merely preparing for citizenship;
2. Society needs the participation of youth;
3. Youth need to participate;
4. Learning requires action.

Adolescents, as citizens, have obligations to their parents, their community, their government, and their society. Adolescence is not a moratorium in the exercising of social responsibility, in which a person is absolved from having to lift a finger to help others or to contribute to the betterment of the society.

Separateness, selfishness, and narcissism, masquerading as enlightenment and liberation, should alarm those of us who are concerned with citizenship education. The health of a democracy is dependent on the capacity of its citizens to

recognize their shared concerns, to consider moral complexity, to accept responsibility for the fate of others, and to be willing to confront and alter injustices — whether their own or someone else's. While youth participation will not alone reverse this trend toward the denial of human reciprocity and community, it can, at the very least, serve as a first step toward counteracting the overemphasis on the self.

Youth are not just a resource to be developed for the future, but are, right now a resource to be enlisted in the fight for a better society. Schools should be seen as fully participating *community* institutions, as centers to which students not only come to learn, but from which they go out into the community to use what they have learned, to add their strength, talents, and energy to those of others tackling society's problems.

The need for self-importance and the need to make a significant contribution to the environment in which one lives are the dominant psychological needs of adolescents.

A person needs a series of significant interactions with the environment to promote movement to higher stages of development.

Learning includes two basic spheres of activity: (1) significant experience, in interaction with (2) careful reflection.

The practical implication of developmental psychology for citizenship education is that there is a need to provide students with new, stimulating and challenging experiences, with the opportunity for significant social role-taking combined with careful reflection.

In addition to developing the skills of learning from contingent experiences, the experience-based learning model can also enhance more familiar classroom approaches. *First*, the opportunity to do something significant with and about what is taught in the classroom has the effect of increasing the students' *motivation*, as they begin to see the connection between what they learn in school and experience in the world, and feel the tension created by their own personal investment in the outcome. *Secondly*, youth participation programs involve the students in *gathering original data* and in *reality testing* both their own conclusions and those presented in the classroom or text. *Thirdly*, students in youth participation programs can gain practical experience in the difficult task of learning to *generalize* from particular

instances to general principles, and to *transfer* this learning to new situations. *Fourthly*, youth participation programs engage students in *critical thinking* and *moral deliberation* as they consider such issues as whether to challenge a policy about the treatment of children in an institution for the retarded.

The underlying central claim is that active participation engages the student in the *application* of what he or she knows, believes, and can do.

Often the best way to begin a youth participation program is by placing students as volunteers in social service agencies. Here the needs are already identified, supervision and expert guidance is on the scene, and, most importantly, students are genuinely needed and thus assigned significant and responsible tasks. In such settings, the value of their contribution is clearly recognized both by the students and their new adult associates.

There are all too few examples of people reaching out to one another, acting on deep-felt concerns, admitting that we may owe something to others, helping others without expecting payment in return. Volunteerism is the most common form of direct citizen involvement, and is the most common vehicle for youth participation in the general community. It can break down barriers between participation in truly making a difference to someone; it puts students in positions of leadership and responsibility; and it involves them as active citizens, meeting significant community needs.

The Need for Goals in a Democracy

These curricular goals reflect a concept of democracy which emphasizes equality through active participation in shaping the future. Students who have been helped to develop skills in active citizenship are less likely to be passive "let-George-do-it" types, and are more likely to feel competent in working toward goals they feel are desirable and important. They are likely to develop positive attitudes about organized participation and its effectiveness in helping build a good community in which to live. To the extent that people feel effective, feel competent to work within legitimate channels to influence political decisions, and feel they share equally in the power to shape their community's future, they are less likely to use illegitimate forms of influence. Had Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont felt they could successfully work toward their goals through legitimate means of influence, it is less likely they would have resorted to the violent confrontation channel they used. Similarly, the FLQ sense of powerlessness and ineffectiveness was probably related to the use of violent means of influence. It is through the development of skills in and positive attitudes toward active civic participation that the social studies program offers hope for a successful democratic society. These competencies contribute the equal access to power needed for widespread support of legitimate democratic government.

An analysis of the active society presented by Etzioni (1968) suggests that teachers may help students develop several kinds of competencies for civil participation. These competencies are based on the recognition that today most people live in urban communities. Because of the large population in urban areas, it is increasingly difficult for individuals working alone to have impact on civil decisions. People must be able to organize groups that can increase their effectiveness by working together toward common goals. This suggests providing students with opportunities to work in groups and develop skills in promoting group cohesion. These would include using praise, drawing in hesitant members, using humor to relieve tension and seeking compromise.

Identifying Goals

Students also need to become skillful in identifying and clarifying group goals. Setting a goal is a natural outgrowth of students' choosing a solution and deciding to work toward it. The goal may be general, like making the neighborhood a

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP: LEARN BY DOING

Chuck Chamberlin

This article originally appeared in Elements, January, 1979.

"Never too young to protest." This was a headline below a photo in the April 13, 1970 edition of the *Edmonton Journal*. The story when explained: "About 80 pupils from Grades 4, 5, and 6 at St. Dominic School staged an eight-block anti-pollution march around their school Saturday. Karen Fredericks, 11, of 13912 - 54 Street, wears an oxygen mask to dramatize the potential danger of breathing increasingly polluted 'fresh' air. The children's demonstration climaxed several weeks of study into the pollution problem. To demonstrate their concern, the pupils cleaned up their own school yard."

Similarly, a class of Grade 2 students in Grande Prairie made the news when they concluded a unit on the neighborhood by writing a letter to their city parks and recreation department requesting that a large dirt pile not be removed. Their efforts to retain what they saw as an important recreational facility met with success — the pile remained.

A Grade 1 class worked on a unit called "Me and My School." The unit concluded with students deciding to promote greater friendliness by using a "Secret Pals" strategy. They each undertook to "do three nice things without getting caught."

These are examples of youngsters learning some of the skills and attitudes needed for active citizenship in their community. These skills and attitudes are consistent with the goals of major curricular documents now appearing. A draft of Alberta's 1978 Social Studies Curriculum indicates teachers should use "inquiry into significant social issues" to enable students to develop abilities needed for "effective participation in community affairs." It lists skills needed "to apply what is learned in real-life situations," including creating a plan of action, applying it, and evaluating it (Alberta Education, 1978).

thier and more attractive place to live, but for successful action toward the goal more specific goals need to be identified, like having litter-free grounds, or increasing the frequency of mowing public parks.

Remy has generated a Citizenship Development Project which helps develop political awareness and participation skills. He suggests that when students examine an issue prior to identifying goals, it is useful to help them learn a decision-making process to use. He describes a "Decision Tree" as a graphic way of helping students understand this process (Figure 1.)

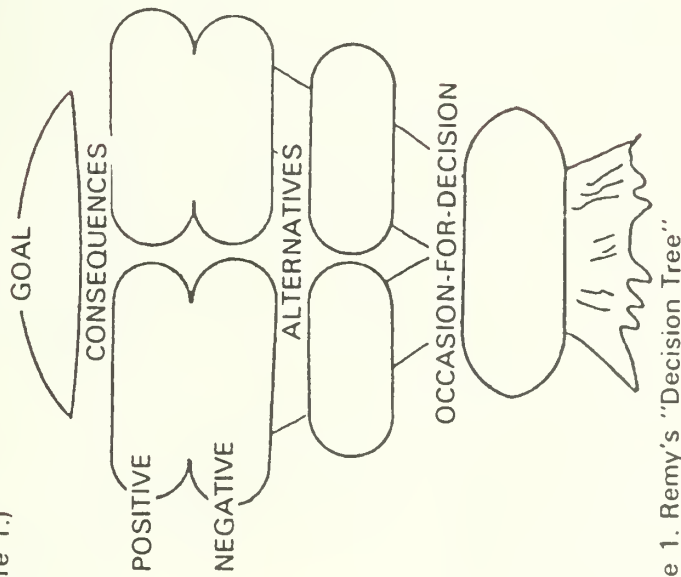


Figure 1. Remy's "Decision Tree"

Remy has used this tree with children in Grades 4, 5, and 6, and finds it successful in helping them work through a complex problem, as well as helping them develop consensus on a goal. Starting at the roots of the tree, students state the "occasion for decision," or the issue confronting them. For the St. Dominic students, it might have been "What should we do to make our neighborhood cleaner and more attractive?" The next level of the tree states alternative solutions. Here students might list:

1. do nothing
2. collect litter

3. distribute flyers to each house
4. ask city council to pass a litter bylaw, et cetera.

Information about each alternative must be collected to help students move to the next level of the tree, predicting positive and negative consequences of each alternative. Finally, students make their choice from among the alternatives on the basis of their values, the top level of the tree.

The completion of this process would result in identification of broad goals accepted by groups within the class, and would prepare them for organizing groups of people to work toward their commonly accepted goals. To the extent that students are able to build widespread consensus on their goals, they will be more likely to succeed in achieving them. Students must be helped to understand the power of numbers, and to develop skills in compromise, building coalitions among groups with somewhat different goals, using shared values to build shared goals. Apparently, the students at St. Dominic began with enough consensus on goals that this wasn't a problem. Had they worked on a problem with several attractive alternatives, they may have needed consensus-building skills.

Group Goals

The advantage of widespread support for group goals leads to another ability — identifying and working with like-minded groups. The students at St. Dominic used an eight-block march to publicize their goals. They might also have contacted such organizations as STOP (Save Tomorrow — Oppose Pollution) and inquired how the two groups might work together to achieve a cleaner environment.

Another skill in gaining wider support for group goals is to be able to recruit new members. The St. Dominic students might have invited parents to a school assembly to convince them to join in their efforts, a presentation at other schools, or set up a display in a shopping mall to seek new member support for their goals. These approaches require abilities in identifying likely target groups, building knowledge about target groups' values, planning effective oral and written appeals, and making effective use of new member abilities.

Of considerable importance is the designing of a plan to accomplish the group's goals. The Grande Prairie Grade 2 students had to build some knowledge about the government

structure in preparation for their action plan. They had to find out who had the power to preserve the dirt pile, then they had to decide how to best influence the power-holders

(Department of Parks and Recreation). Becoming skillful in letter writing, collecting signatures on a petition, and talking to elected and appointed officials personally or by phone calls all contribute to an effective plan for achieving group goals. Often, students must learn to allocate specific tasks among members with different strengths. Speaking, writing, drawing and leadership are obvious strengths which may need to be identified, but for the St. Dominic students, so were the strength and dependability needed to mount their schoolyard clean-up.

Communication Skills Help Achieve Goals

Newmann, in his *Skills in Citizen Action*, places strong emphasis on the need for effective communication skills if students are to be effective in civic participation. Students need to develop ability to empathize with the audience they wish to influence; project a desire to listen, understand, and be understood; use both verbal and nonverbal expression effectively; and project enthusiasm about their message. To help develop these abilities, Newmann suggests:

Students can practice speaking and writing to each other, listening to and reading the messages of each other in a variety of situations. Video and audio tapes can show students how they look and sound. Students can paraphrase the messages they "receive," giving an indication to the senders of what was communicated . . . In addition, students can analyze the behavior of others (parents, counsellors, friends), evaluating the quality of interpersonal communication. (p.38)

These suggestions are part of Newmann's recommendation that social studies and language be integrated around the development of competencies in citizen action. In elementary school classrooms, this would be a practical approach to helping students appreciate the importance of applying language skills and giving them meaningful practice in those skills.

An extension of the language skills into the use of media is also desirable. To recruit new members or influence power-holders, students need to learn how to use the locally available media. In large cities, this includes local cable TV or independent TV channels. These outlets are frequently required by federal regulation to provide prescribed amounts of

local programming, and are receptive to requests for use of air time by local groups. Students need to be aware of the use of such media, and develop skills in planning effective TV presentations. Consideration of pacing, variety, graphics and audio background all can help increase audience impact of the message planned. Mitchell's *Televising Your Message* has further suggestions for effective use of this medium.

Summary

Political alienation develops when people feel their government is unresponsive to their needs and wants. This alienation has sometimes led to groups working toward their goals outside legitimate channels — witness Riel and the FLQ. However, students may be helped to develop both positive attitudes toward civic participation and competencies essential for effectively influencing those who are elected or appointed to help them. Such attitudes and competencies make democracy more likely to work. These attitudes and abilities are now included in some social studies curricula, and teachers are providing elementary students with the experiences necessary to develop them. These skills emphasize clarifying goals, through such processes as Remy's "Decision Tree" outlines. Other key skills include building consensus, enlarging group membership, designing a plan to achieve the goals, and using media to convey the message with maximum impact.

As children are introduced to the realities of civic participation through experience such as those in St. Dominic school, people are more likely to feel they can guide their own destiny and that of their society, and help shape the future they desire.

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